NOTES FOR A STATEMENT TO THE LEGISLATURE BY HONOURABLE LEO BERNIER, MINISTER OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS 25 May 1979

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NOTES FOR A STATEMENT TO THE LEGISLATURE BY
HONOURABLE LEO BERNIER, MINISTER OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS
25 May 1979

MR. SPEAKER!

LAST NIGHT I HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO MEET THE COUNCIL

OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FIELD AND OUTLINE OUR OFFER OF SUPPORT

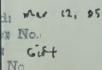
TO RE-ESTABLISH COMMUNITY LIFE IN THEIR FLOOD DEVESTATED

AREA.

AS MANY MEMBERS KNOW THE VILLAGE OF FIELD IS A SETTLEMENT OF MORE THAN 300 RESIDENTS APPROXIMATELY 22 KILOMETERS NORTHWEST OF STURGEON FALLS. IT WAS ALMOST COMPLETELY INUNDATED WHEN THE STURGEON RIVER OVERFLOWED EARLY THIS MONTH AND ALL 94 HOMES IN THE COMMUNITY HAD TO BE EVACUATED.

FOLLOWING THE PREMIER'S VISIT THERE AT THE HEIGHT OF THE FLOOD IT WAS DECLARED A DISASTER AREA AND THE PROVINCE AGREED TO PROVIDE \$4 TO EACH \$1 RAISED THROUGH PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION.

WE HAVE ALL BEEN VERY GRATIFIED BY THE SYMPATHETIC RESPONSE TO THE FIELD TRAGEDY FROM ACROSS CANADA AND PARTICULARLY FROM COMMUNITIES LIKE COBALT WHICH CAME THROUGH SIMILAR ORDEALS IN THE PAST.



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IN CONSIDERING RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMUNITY, THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FIELD TOOK INTO ACCOUNT THE VULNERABLE POSITION OF HOMES LOCATED ON THE FLOOD PLAIN OF THE STURGEON RIVER AND DECIDED IT WAS PREFERABLE TO RELOCATE THE TOWNSITE TO HIGHER GROUND RATHER THAN DEVELOP EXTRAORDINARY FLOOD CONTROL WORKS.

THEY ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO HELP WITH THE EXTRA COSTS OF FLOOD RELATED SERVICES OVER THE PAST MONTH AND FOR ASSISTANCE WITH THE RE-LOCATION PROGRAM.

LAST NIGHT I WAS ABLE, ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT, TO RE-ASSURE THEM OF BOTH.

ON THE FIRST QUESTION, MY COLLEAGUE THE SOLICITOR GENERAL HAS UNDERTAKEN TO PROVIDE UP TO A TOTAL OF \$190,000 TO THE TOWNSHIPS OF FIELD, SPRINGER AND CALDWELL AND THE TOWN OF STURGEON FALLS TOWARD EXTRA COSTS THEY FACE AS A RESULT OF THE FLOOD.

MY COLLEAGUE, THE MINISTER OF HOUSING IS ACQUIRING A NUMBER OF MOBILE HOMES WHICH WILL BE LOCATED ON GOVERNMENT OWNED LAND AT STURGEON FALLS FOR USE AS TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR THE DISPLACED FAMILIES WHO HAVE NOT FOUND ACCOMMODATION ELSEWHERE.

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AT THE SAME TIME MY COLLEAGUES THE MINISTER OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF HOUSING WILL
HELP THE TOWNSHIP TO ACQUIRE AND DEVELOP A NEW
TOWNSITE THEY HAVE SELECTED ABOVE THE FLOOD PLAIN TO
PROVIDE ENOUGH SERVICED HALF-ACRE LOTS TO HANDLE THE
RELOCATION.

EACH HOME OWNER WITH RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY ON THE FLOOD PLAIN AND THIS INCLUDES THOSE IN THE VILLAGE OF FIELD AS WELL AS CRYSTAL FALLS AND RIVER VALLEY, WILL BE GIVEN A NEW SERVICED LOT IN RETURN FOR TITLE TO HIS OR HER PRESENT PROPERTY -- THAT IS A LOT FOR LOT EXCHANGE.

WHERE IT IS FEASIBLE OR PRACTICAL THEY WILL BE ABLE TO MOVE THEIR EXISTING HOUSE TO THEIR NEW LOT AT OUR EXPENSE.

WHERE HOMES ARE DAMAGED OR UNSUITABLE FOR RELOCATION WE WILL PURCHASE THEM AT FAIR MARKET VALUE -- ESTABLISHED BEFORE THE FLOOD, OF COURSE, AND THE OWNERS CAN REBUILD ON THEIR LOT IN THE NEW TOWNSITE OR ELSEWHERE.

IN ORDER TO INSURE THAT THE VICTIMS OF THIS MISFORTUNE

ARE NOT FURTHER CRIPPLED IN FINDING ALTERNATE HOUSING

WE PLAN SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE WITH HOMES OF LOWER

THAN NORMAL VALUE.

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TO DO THIS WE WILL PROVIDE UP TO \$5,000 IN SPECIAL FUNDING ON TOP OF THE PRICE OF ANY HOUSE WHOSE FAIR MARKET VALUE, DETERMINED BY INDEPENDENT APPRAISERS, IS LESS THAN \$20,000.

FOR EXAMPLE THE OWNER OF A HOUSE VALUED AT \$12,000 WOULD RECEIVE THE FULL AMOUNT TO BRING THE PRICE TO \$17,000, WHILE ONE VALUED AT \$18,000 WOULD RECEIVE \$2,000 TO THE \$20,000 CEILING.

IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THIS PROGRAM AND MINIMIZE

HARDSHIPS AND DELAY THE GOVERNMENT HAS DESIGNATED

HERB AIKEN, MY ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER FOR NORTHEASTERN

ONTARIO AS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR TO ENSURE THAT

ALL THE GOVERNMENT'S RESOURCES ARE READILY ACCESSIBLE

TO THE COUNCIL AND THE RESIDENTS OF FIELD.

AS I SAID, MR. SPEAKER, I HAVE ALREADY OUTLINED OUR RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL AND MR. AIKEN WILL ATTEND A MEETING OF RESIDENTS ON SATURDAY MORNING TO RESPOND TO THEIR CONCERNS.

AT THE SAME TIME I ALONG WITH A NUMBER OF MY CABINET COLLEAGUES WILL MEET HERE TUESDAY WITH THE OWNERS OF THE FIELD LUMBER COMPANY TO SEE HOW WE CAN ASSIST THEM TO OVERCOME THE RAVAGES OF THE FLOOD ON THEIR OPERATION WHICH IS SUCH AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE COMMUNITY.

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FINALLY, MR. SPEAKER, I WOULD LIKE TO SAY A BRIEF WORD

OF ADMIRATION FOR THE MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS IN WEST

NIPISSING AND THE PEOPLE OF FIELD WHO HAVE SUFFERED

THIS APPALING MISFORTUNE WITH GREAT FORTITUDE, COURAGE

AND FORSIGHT.

WHAT WE ARE SEEING FROM THEM IS A MARVELOUS DEMONSTRATION

OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT AND I THINK WE IN THIS HOUSE ARE

HONORED TO BE ABLE TO HELP THEM TO FACE THE FUTURE WITH

CONFIDENCE.

THANK YOU.

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